

KYAE Program Design Parameters

June 22, 2011

KYAE programs are expected to provide structured, scheduled, instructor-led learning opportunities resulting in successful student and program outcomes as well as effectiveness and efficiency.

Through the RFP process, KYAE will require all programs in fiscal year 2012-13 to incorporate the following managed program elements in their program design. KYAE strongly encourages programs to adopt these elements in the 2011-12 fiscal year to transition from an open-entry model.

- Scheduled orientation and assessment.
- Scheduled classes based on student demand.
- Scheduled education alternatives for students whose work or family obligations do not allow them to attend scheduled classes.

Scheduled orientation and assessment

Research indicates that the first three weeks of a student's participation in adult education are critical to the student's continued motivation and persistence. Therefore, ensuring that students get a good start through a welcoming, attentive and thorough intake, orientation and assessment process is extremely important. A scheduled orientation allows adult educators to provide the level of attention this process requires. It also allows students to begin developing learning communities, which are important to their persistence and success.

Establishing a scheduled time each week for assessment, especially in small programs with "one-room" centers, is critical to student success. For assessments to be valid and provide accurate information on which a student's learning plan is based, they must be proctored and in a quiet and calm environment when a student is prepared to take the assessment. A managed assessment process can reduce overtesting of students. In addition, a managed assessment process will increase efficiency and ensure appropriate administration and protocols of required assessments.

Scheduled classes

KYAE will require all programs to establish and promote scheduled classes based on student demand. To develop a class schedule, programs should determine student demand through methods such as analyzing student attendance patterns and surveying current students to ensure that classes are being offered at times when students are most likely to attend.

It is expected that most students in each adult education program will be enrolled in classes.

Scheduled classes:

- Must be taught by an instructor and should use syllabi, lesson plans and standard curricula.
- Should employ differentiated instruction when necessary to meet the needs of students at various levels. Differentiated instruction is especially important for small programs. Simply put, differentiated instruction employs multiple instructional approaches so that the teacher is effectively reaching students who are at various academic levels and have various learning styles.
- Should use technology, such as distance learning products, KET resources and partnership and other forms of technology.
- Include various instructional styles, strategies, adaptations and resources to meet the needs of all students, including those with learning challenges.
- Integrate job-ready and digital literacy skills into academic subjects.
- May have varied timeframes and may be adjusted as necessary, for example mid-session, based on student and program needs.
- May allow students to enter a class in progress, providing the student's assessment suggests that the student is prepared for the material being covered at that point in the class.

Programs must set local guidelines regarding:

- Class attendance.
- Class size and teacher-student ratio.
- Student commitment.
- Student conduct.

There are many reasons that scheduled classes are beneficial to students, instructors and programs:

Efficiency – Scheduled classes enable program directors to develop a more structured plan for utilizing and managing staff, operational hours and resources.

Program management – Program directors are better able to plan instruction around instructors' educational background and skills. Forming classes based on academic subjects and making teaching assignments based on instructor strengths, rather than each instructor teaching multiple subjects, leads to better outcomes for students and programs as well as improved job satisfaction.

Increased retention – Research suggests scheduled classes contribute to regular attendance and lead to increases in retention and learning outcomes. In addition, students experience an increased sense of community and cohesiveness among student cohorts or "learning communities," which is directly related to an increase in retention.

Classroom management – Managed classes foster an environment that requires teacher preparation and allows for optimal educational planning. Instructors have the opportunity to create and use lesson plans, syllabi and differentiated instructional strategies. In open entry models, instructors are unaware of how many students will attend on any given day or what subject area(s) they will be teaching, which can lead to a chaotic environment for both students and instructors.

Scheduled education alternatives

KYAE recognizes that classroom attendance may not be possible for some students, especially those who are employed. Also, students may need an education alternative:

- While they are waiting for a new class to start.
- Before they are academically prepared to join a class.
- As supplemental instruction while enrolled in a class.

In acknowledgment of adult students' potential barriers, KYAE will require that, in addition to scheduled classes, programs also schedule structured education alternatives to meet student needs.

It is expected that a minority of students in each program will receive their primary instruction in education alternatives.

Structured options may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **"Holding" classes** – Some programs have established "holding" classes for students who want to enroll while classes are already underway. Some "holding" classes allow students to work on reading and study skills based on social studies and science in an instructor-led class. When a class opens in the student's needed academic area, the student is enrolled in the class.
- **Scheduled labs** – A structured lab can be designed for students who miss the start of a new class, do not want to participate in a classroom setting or need additional assistance. Instructor-led labs allow students unable to attend scheduled classes to have an alternative learning opportunity allowing them to accomplish their educational goals without creating another barrier to their success.
- **Computer labs** – Computer labs for independent student study may be open and available to students any time the adult education center is open.
- **Distance learning** – Students may begin or supplement their studies using a distance learning product.
- **KET partnership** – Enrolling students through the KET partnership allows them to start an academic program in lieu of classes or while waiting for a class to start.
- **Study time/study groups** – Study time provides an opportunity for students to independently study and/or complete homework while at the center and is especially important for students who do not

have a home environment conducive to learning. Another option is providing opportunities for students to gather pre- or post-class in a facilitated or unfacilitated study group.

- **Workshops** – Short-term academic workshops on targeted areas allow new students, who may be waiting for a scheduled class to start, to begin their academic work in targeted areas such as multiplication tables, calculator use, graphic information or other topics.